

# TO THE CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE STOWMARKET URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

27TH JANUARY, 1899.

GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour of presenting to you my second Annual Report on the health of Stowmarket for the year ending 31st December, 1898.

## VITAL STATISTICS.

I have estimated the population of Stowmarket to the middle of the year, 1898, at 4,546, and based the following statistics on that estimate.

**Birth Rate.** During the year there were 98 Births registered in Stowmarket (34 males, 64 females) one birth occurred in the Workhouse, which really belonged to Stowmarket, so that the correct number of Births for the year was 99—giving a Birth Rate of 21.7 per 1000, the lowest Birth Rate recorded; in 1888 it was 26.2, and the average for the last 10 years was 25.3 per 1000.

**Death Rate.** The number of Deaths registered during the year was 71, and this, with 6 Deaths which occurred in the Workhouse and belonged to the town, made a total of 77 for the year (38 males, 39 females) and gives a Death Rate for the year of 16.9 per 1000. This is the highest Death Rate recorded during the last 5 years, and has only been exceeded twice during the last 20 years, viz.: in 1890 and 1893; last year it was only 14.1.

The mean Death Rate for the last 10 years was 15.6 per 1000, and the mean Death Rate for the 10 years previous was 15.4 per 1000. During this time the Death Rate of England has fallen some 4 per 1000, chiefly through sanitary improvements, and the Death Rate of Stowmarket has during the same time been stationary; the inference is obvious.

**Infant Mortality.** During the year 17 infants died before they reached the age of one year. These deaths are to a large extent preventible, being chiefly caused by bad feeding and insanitary surroundings.

The Infant mortality was 171.7 per 1000 births; last year this Death Rate was 110, and the year before only 93.4 per 1000 births.

**Zymotic Death Rate.** The Deaths caused by the seven principal Zymotic Diseases numbered 15; eight were caused by Whooping Cough, three by Diarrhœa, and one by Typhoid Fever. This gives a Zymotic Death Rate of 3.2 per 1000 (13 of the 15 deaths were of children under 5 years) The epidemics of Measles and Whooping Cough were the chief cause of this high Death Rate.

**Tubercular Diseases.** There were two Deaths from Phthisis registered during the year and six from other Tubercular Diseases, making a total of 8 for the year. Recently special attention has been drawn to these Diseases by the National Association for the Prevention of Tuberculosis. Tubercular Diseases, which include Phthisis or Consumption, Tubercular Meningitis, Lupus, Scrofula, etc., are all infectious and therefore preventible, and not as popularly believed hereditary.

These Diseases are all caused by a certain bacillus either entering the system with the food, (*e.g.* infected milk or meat) or the breath (through the dust in the air containing the dried expectoration of consumptives). Therefore houses in which deaths have occurred from consumption ought to be disinfected, and those suffering from the disease should in the interests of others absolutely destroy or properly disinfect their expectoration. In their own interest they should have proper means of ventilation in their homes, their food properly cooked and their milk sterilized or boiled.

**Other Deaths.** There were 7 deaths caused by Cancer, 7 by Heart Disease, 1 by Erysipelas, and the cause of one was returned as unknown (an infant) and 1 inquest was held.

## INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

There were 28 notifications of Infectious Diseases received during the year, this being the smallest number reported in any year since 1892.

**Scarlet Fever.** Fourteen Cases of Scarlet Fever were reported, being six less than last year. There were no deaths. Two of the cases were treated in the Infectious Diseases Hospital. The usefulness of this Hospital is greatly impeded by the want of a Disinfecting Chamber and also a Cottage for the use of a caretaker.

Erysipelas.

Four Cases of Erysipelas were reported and one ended fatally.

Typhoid Fever

There were 6 Cases of Typhoid Fever reported, one was imported and one ended fatally (a second case has since died).

Since the Infectious Diseases Act has been in force in Stowmarket, 24 cases of Typhoid have been reported. The following Table shows the years and number of cases.

1890	1891	1892	1893	1894	1895	1896	1897	1898
4	2	1	1	3	3	0	4	6

From this table you will see that during the last 2 years as many cases occurred as in the previous 6 years.

Typhoid Fever is a Disease chiefly caused by drinking polluted water. In this kind of water the germs will live and flourish for a considerable time.

The ground water in Stowmarket which supplies all the wells, except the deep one at the Water Works, is polluted with sewage from leaky drains and badly constructed cess-pools. All these wells therefore are a source of danger to the Public Health, and should in the interest of the Public Health be closed as soon as the Main Drainage Scheme is in working order. Then, also, the Water Company's water can be laid on to the houses not already supplied, and the cess-pools done away with.

In the 5 cases of Typhoid which were not imported, the drinking water on analysis was found to be polluted with sewage matter.

I consider these wells to be the greatest sanitary defect in our town, and as long as ~~they exist we are threatened with an epidemic of Typhoid Fever.~~ Out of 1006 houses in Stowmarket only 310 are supplied with the Water Works water.

Diphtheria.

Four cases of Diphtheria were reported compared with 7 last year and 3 the year before. They occurred in different months and in different parts of the town, and apparently had no connection with each other. There were no deaths. One case was imported, in another case two cess-pools at the back of the house were found to be out of repair, in the other cases no glaring sanitary defect was discovered in or about the houses.

Sanitary  
Improvements.

- (1). During the year the New Sewage Scheme has been commenced.
- (2). Twenty-seven new services have been laid on by the Water Works Company.
- (3). Five polluted wells have been closed.

Summary of work  
done by the San-  
itary Inspector.

- (1). Thirteen complaints of nuisances were received and attended to.
- (2). Forty-three nuisances were detected and abated.
- (3). Ten houses were disinfected, and in one house Scarlet Fever recurred after the disinfection.
- (4). Cottages were inspected at Violet Hill, Union Street, Church Walk, Bury Street, Bond Street, and Lime-tree Place, where scavenging was necessary.
- (5). The two lodging houses were visited and found in a satisfactory condition.
- (6). Two workshops were visited and various sanitary defects were remedied.
- (7). Between 160 and 172 vaults were cleaned out.

THE FOLLOWING TABLES SHOW:—

- (A.)           The mortality from all causes and at different ages.
- (B.)           The population, registered births, and new cases of infectious diseases notified.
- (C.)           Compares the Birth Rate, Death Rate, and Zymotic Death Rate of the Urban Districts in East Suffolk in 1897, with Stowmarket and East Stow in 1898.

In conclusion, I have to acknowledge the willing help I have received from the Sanitary Inspector, and to thank the Chairman and Members of the Council for the considerate manner in which they have always received my recommendations.

I have the honour to remain, Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

CHAS. W. LOW, M. B., D. P. H., &c.

Table of DEATHS during the year 1898, in the Stowmarket Urban District, classified according to DISEASES, AGES and LOCALITIES.

Table (A)

NAMES OF LOCALITIES adopted for the purpose of these Statistics; public institutions being shown as separate localities.  (Columns of Population and Births are in Table B.)  (a)	MORTALITY FROM ALL CAUSES, AT SUBJOINED AGES.							(i)	MORTALITY FROM SUBJOINED CAUSES, DISTINGUISHING DEATHS OF CHILDREN UNDER FIVE YEARS OF AGE.										
	At all ages.	Under 1 year.	1 and under 5.	5 and under 15.	15 and under 25.	25 and under 65.	65 and upwards.		FE-VERS	Erysipelas.	Measles.	Whooping Cough.	Diarrhoea and Dysentery.	Phthisis.	Bronchitis, Pneumonia and Pleurisy.	Heart Disease.	Injuries.	All other Diseases.	TOTAL.
									Enteric or Typhoid.										
STOWMARKET -								Under 5		2	8	2	1	11				6	30
	71	16	14	5	3	11	22	5 upwards	1	1	1		1	2	8	7	1	19	41
The subjoined numbers have also to be taken into account in judging of the above records of mortality. See Note below.																			
Deaths occurring outside the district among persons belonging thereto	6					3	2	5 upwards						1	1			3	5

Area and Population of the District or Division to which this Return relates.		
Area in Acres, 2177.		
Population (Last Census) - - 4341.		
,, (Estimated to middle of 1898) 4546.		
Death Rates.	General	16.9
	Infant (under one year of age)	171.7
		per 1,000 Population, estimated to middle of 1898.
		per 1,000 Births registered.

Table of POPULATION, BIRTHS, and of NEW CASES OF INFECTIOUS SICKNESS coming to the knowledge of the Medical Officer of Health, during the year 1898, in the Stowmarket Urban District, classified according to DISEASES, AGES & LOCALITIES.

Table (B)

NAMES OF LOCALITIES adopted for the purpose of these Statistics; Public Institutions being shown as separate localities.  (a)	POPULATION AT ALL AGES.		Registered Births.  (d)	Aged under 5 or over 5.  (e)	NEW CASES OF SICKNESS IN EACH LOCALITY, COMING TO THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH.				CASES TREATED IN ISOLATION HOSPITAL.  Scarlatina.
	Last Census.	Estimated to middle of 1898.			Scarlatina.	Diphtheria	FEVERS.	Erysipelas.	
	(b)	(c)			Enteric or Typhoid.				
(H) STOWMARKET -				Under 5	4				
	4341	4546	98	5 upwards	10	4	6	4	2

Table (C.)

Urban Districts.	Date.	Population.	Birth Rate.	Death Rate.	Zymotic Death Rate.
Aldeburgh ...	1897	2300	20.4	15.6	0.86
Beccles ...	„	6669	27.7	14.9	0.89
Felixstowe ...	„	4945	23.8	9.5	0.60
Leiston ...	„	2845	31.3	8.1	0.00
Southwold ...	„	2800	20.7	13.5	0.00
Woodbridge ...	„	4500	27.9	15.7	
Stowmarket ...	„	4518	24.1	14.1	0.60
East Suffolk ...	„	189930	26.8	14.5	0.83
England ...	„		29.7	17.4	2.10
Stowmarket ...	1898	4546	21.7	16.9	3 20
East Stow ...	„	6106	26.6	16.8	1.80

